

EURARMY

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UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE & 7TH ARMY — FREEDOM'S EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

FALL 2006



Immediate Response '06

plus...

Polish Pilgrimage

Strykers arrive

Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus on training

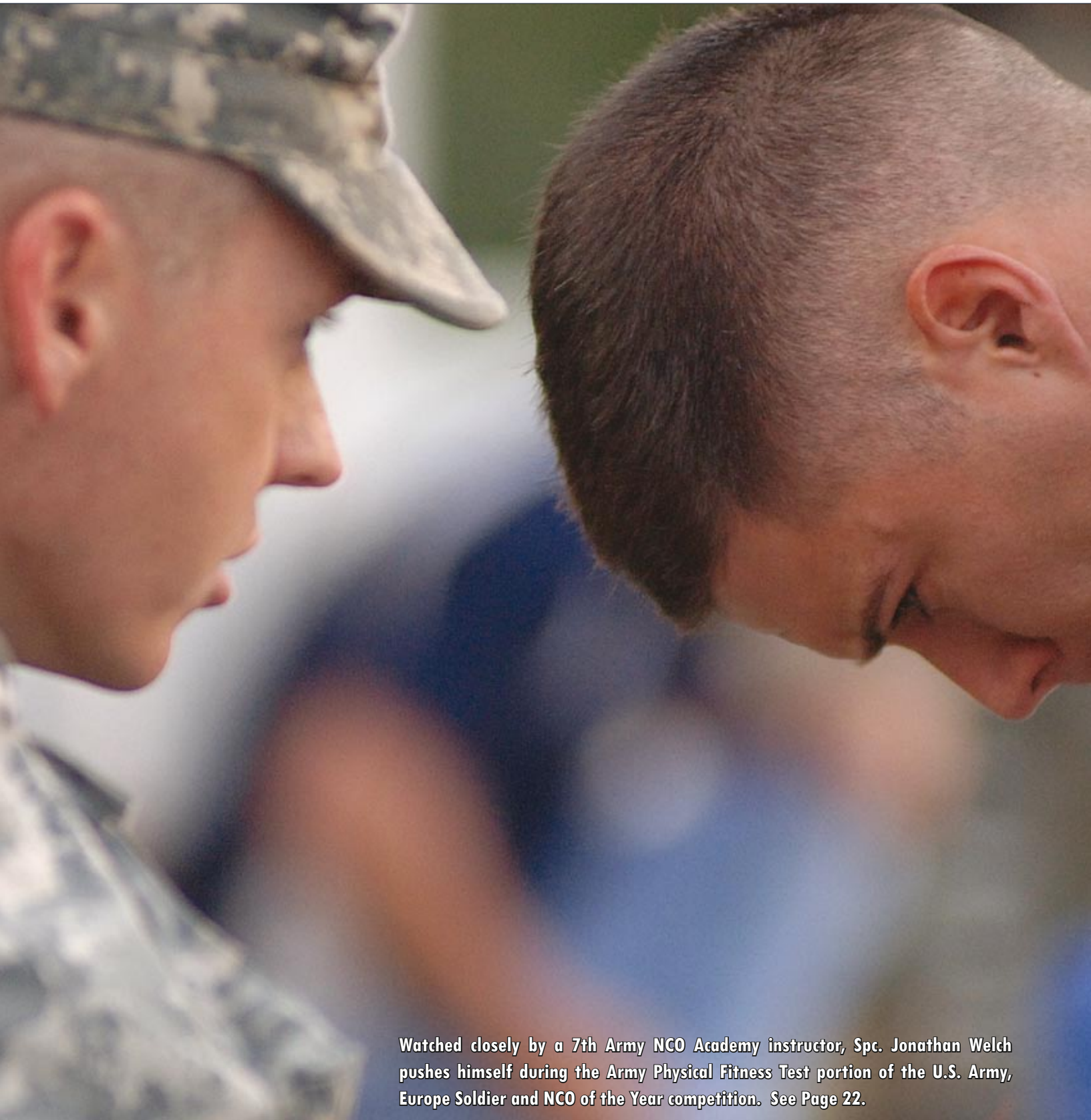
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Watched closely by a 7th Army NCO Academy instructor, Spc. Jonathan Welch pushes himself during the Army Physical Fitness Test portion of the U.S. Army, Europe Soldier and NCO of the Year competition. See Page 22.



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Photo by Arthur McQueen, USAREUR PAO

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EURArmy

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Cover: Bulgarian and U.S. Soldiers maneuver an infantry fighting vehicle during exercise Immediate Response '06. Photo by Gary L. Kieffer, USAREUR PAO

Back Cover: Spc. Jonathan Welch crosses a rope bridge during the SOY/NCOY "Mystery Event." Photo by Spc. Matthis Chiroux, USAREUR PAO

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COMMANDER'S NOTES

USAREUR Soldiers are fortunate to be stationed in Europe and have the opportunity to train with fellow Soldiers from many nations. We operate today - and will in the future - in joint, coalition and interagency environments.

I recently visited Bulgaria for exercise Immediate Response '06, where U.S., Bulgarian and Romanian Soldiers held combined training. I was impressed by the expertise of our coalition partners. It was truly rewarding to see, in a few short days, the great strides all of our Soldiers made in interoperability.

All of our Soldiers are remarkable, and in spite of language differences, quickly form friendships with fellow warriors. It is these personal relationships that are the roots of coalition building.

The Global War on Terrorism is a coalition fight. Terrorism affects the entire world. Threats are transnational and asymmetric, requiring allied partners to pull together to defeat them. The rewards of exercises such as Immediate Response are evident in the list of nations contributing forces for operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

In Afghanistan, NATO is helping to bring stability by denying terrorists a safe haven. In taking over responsibility for southern Afghanistan, the NATO International Security Assistance Force is supplying thousands of

more troops and greater capability to the area and building the country's future as a free nation.

During the summer, we held numerous training exercises with NATO and coalition partners. But there are other ways to form friendships. Soldiers from the Southern European Task Force, along with Soldiers from the Illinois Army National Guard, marched in a pilgrimage with fellow Soldiers from Poland, Germany, Estonia and Slovakia. Yes, it was training – as the trekkers covered 180 miles in 10 days – but it also was a great way to forge lasting friendships.

The one constant in these training exercises is the professionalism of all participants – not just the training units.

Equally professional are the observer controllers, exercise designers and technicians of the Joint Multinational Training Command. They are the ones who make training happen.

At JMTC's training platforms in Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels, Soldiers take advantage of force-on-force capabilities, as well as the multipurpose range complex located on the largest training area outside of the continental United States.

JMTC is able to export its training to any training area and create a fully instrumented force-on-force training experience. For example, the JMTC recently traveled to the Republic of Georgia to help prepare its 31st



Light Infantry Battalion for its upcoming deployment to Iraq.

In the near future, USAREUR and JMTC will begin working with the Army's newest fighting vehicle – the Stryker.

The 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment now calls USAREUR home and will benefit from quality training with joint, combined and coalition forces in their backyard.

I want to thank all the troopers, civilians and family members of USAREUR for all their daily accomplishments in improving our communities and for their contribution to winning the Global War on Terrorism. USAREUR is and will continue to be a great assignment for Soldiers and families.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'D. McKiernan'.

DAVID D. MCKIERNAN
General, USA
Commanding



Taking a Dead Aim

A paratrooper from the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team participates in urban movement tactics training in San Giorgio, Italy. Photo by Sgt. Brandon Aird, 173rd Airborne Brigade Public Affairs

'Words from the field'

"This man is the godfather of trauma care. Why do you think I'm here? This was my day off."

Sgt. Anil Shandil, a nurse in the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center Intensive Care Unit, attending a guest lecture by Dr. Ernest Moore, as part of LRMC's Distinguished Visiting Surgeon Program.

"Awesome ranges!"

Marine Capt. Francisco Zavala, Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team platoon commander, on his leathernecks using 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command facilities to hone their skills.

"It's like being on a basketball team. You practice for years and you never get in the game. Then, all of a sudden, you get your chance."

Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Osborne, communications NCO, 9th Engineer Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, preparing to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"We are all Soldiers. We speak the same language."

Bulgarian Army Lt. Peno Todaranov, leading a combined platoon of U.S., Romanian and Bulgarian troops during the trilateral exercise Immediate Response '06.

Combat aviation brigade flies

The 12th Combat Aviation Brigade – U.S. Army, Europe's first unit of its kind – activated Aug. 7 at Ansbach, Germany.

The 12th CAB combines five former aviation organizations and is part of the Army's overall transformation plan, said Col. Tim Edens, brigade commander.

"It will help make USAREUR's aviation element more modular, better reactive and easier to deploy," he said.

Before 12th CAB stood up, various USAREUR aviation elements were divided into separate brigades with dissimilar equipment, which made training and deploying more complicated than necessary, Edens said.

"Previously, brigades had different helicopters," the colonel explained. "One brigade had

Apaches, one brigade had Chinooks and so forth. The 12th CAB brings everyone together, making for a more robust and combat-ready unit."

The 12th CAB will also have better logistical capabilities and easier maintenance, along with a medium-lift capability provided by the Chinook helicopter, he said.

"By medium-lift," Edens said, "we mean the ability to move heavy equipment without needing a landing strip that other large aircraft do."

"The Chinook fills that capability and was the lifeline during Operation Iraqi Freedom and the humanitarian relief effort following last year's devastating Pakistani earthquake."

—By Spc. Andrew Orillion, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs



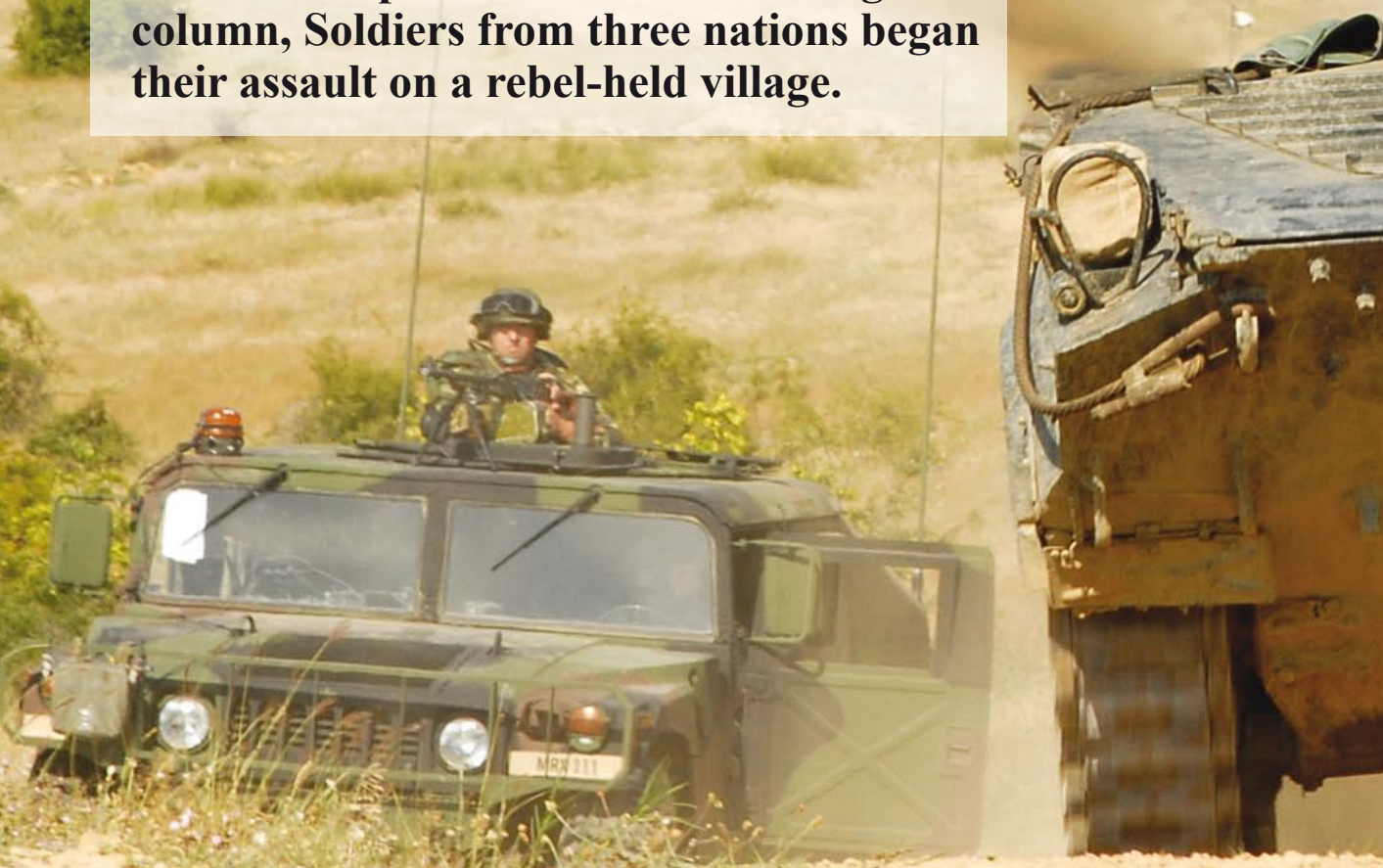
Lt. Col. Vernon E. O'Donnell, 7th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, salutes during his unit's inactivation, part of the 12th CAB's stand-up. Photo by Jim Hughes, USAG Ansbach Public Affairs

IMMEDIATE

Trilateral exercise draws allied t

By Gary L. Kieffer, USAREUR Public Affairs,
Spc. Andrew Orillion and Spc. Tanya Polk,
1st Armored Division Public Affairs

The dull roar of diesel engines echoed from behind the tree-lined ridge as the combat vehicles bore down on their objective. Gunners stood in turrets, scanning the terrain with their weapons as the armored formation rushed forward. Following the clanking tracks of an armored personnel carrier leading the column, Soldiers from three nations began their assault on a rebel-held village.



RESPONSE '06

troops to Bulgaria



Photo by Gary L. Kieffer, USAREUR PAO

To those who have served in combat, it sounds as if someone were describing a coalition mission in Iraq or Afghanistan, where Soldiers clad in various uniforms fight shoulder-to-shoulder to get the job done.

This location was neither, though; this operation took place in central Bulgaria at the Novo Selo training area – all part of exercise Immediate Response '06.

Forces from the U.S. 1st Armored Division, the Romanian 21st Infantry Regiment “Red Scorpions,” and the Bulgarian 61st Stryama Mechanized Brigade combined to support U.S. Army, Europe’s theater engagement program, which increases NATO interoperability through combined exercises among partner nations.

Throughout the weeklong exercise, which also included maneuvers in Romania, two themes resonated: realism and cooperation.

“Immediate Response’s main objective was to improve our training and to participate in joint coalition operations,” said Bulgarian Col. Biser Petrov, exercise co-director. “Interoperability with NATO forces is of paramount importance for us.”

Cooperation at headquarters level illustrates the command-and-control level view of combined forces interacting. But when it gets down to boots-on-the-ground territory, “combined” means Soldiers – no matter their nationality – fighting alongside each other against a common enemy.

During various training scenarios, U.S., Bulgarian and Romanian troops integrated into three platoons, built from one squad from each country. Each platoon was led by a command-



Bulgarian Soldiers provide covering fire while members of the 1-94 FA tend to a “wounded” comrade. Photos by Gary L. Kieffer, USAREUR PAO

er from another country. This setup was the basic unit structure for those engaged in the exercise.

“Training events were the catalyst of IR '06,” said Lt. Col.

Jenks Reid, a senior task force observer controller from the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany. “This was team building with new allies, cementing trust and cooperation, setting the stage for the near future. This is a building block of USAREUR’s joint perspective.”

Col. James D. Shumway, exercise co-director and commander of 1st Armored Division Engineer Brigade, concurred.

“Clearly, this was about interaction of our forces,” he said. “With USAREUR anticipating additional exercises with our partners ... we are working from a framework of the past, to develop training for the future.”

Partnership training for IR '06 kicked off with a weapons familiarization exchange. The U.S. Soldiers trained their NATO counterparts on common U.S. weaponry: M-9 pistol, M-16 assault rifle, M-240B medium-machine gun, M-249 automatic-weapon and M-19 grenade machine gun.

Conversely, the eastern Europeans educated their U.S. military brethren on AK-47 assault



A Bulgarian plays the role of a villager during Immediate Response '06. “Civilians on the battlefield” are standard to Joint Multinational Readiness Center training, both in Germany and when deployed.



rifles, the PKM general-purpose machine gun and the RPK machine gun.

“It was a unity-building event to exchange and fire weapons,” said 1st Lt. Caleb McKeel, with the 1st AD’s 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Regiment. “It’s not so much about marksmanship; it’s more about cohesiveness.”

McKeel added that weapons belonging to eastern European forces are similar to those used by Iraqi insurgents.

“If we learn more about their weaponry (here), maybe it will help us later in combat,” he said.

Weapons familiarization was just the first building block emphasized during Immediate Response. Other modules included military operations in urban terrain, convoy maneuvers, an air assault mission and a raid on a hostile village.

With a trio of armies that bring an assortment of strategies, planners took a “crawl-walk-and-run approach,” said JMRC observer controller Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Coulantuono.

Before training, combined platoons were divided into nine teams, each with three Soldiers from every country. Although platoon members spoke different languages, communication wasn’t a barrier.

As Bulgarian Lt. Peno Todoranov pointed out: “We are all Soldiers. So in a way, we speak the same language.”

Initial training started off bare-boned with engineer tape laid out to represent the outline of a building. After grasping

the basics of moving as a team and proper positioning prior to entering a room, participants graduated to working in actual buildings.

“Even though these Soldiers are from three different countries, they performed as if they have always worked together,” said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Creamer, JMRC observer controller. “It went better than expected.”

Overall, the JMRC staff developed exercise setups that emphasized realism. The training continued with multi-roomed buildings, complete with obstacles and friendly and hostile occupants, a situation commonly found on today’s battlefield.

“This is some of the best training we can do,” Todoranov said, adding that it teaches a Soldier how to move and to react.

Using DISE

To ensure the troops responded as if every movement mattered, the 43 JMRC members brought along an exercise warfare tool that puts troops on the front line.

It’s called the Deployable Instrumentation System, Europe, a technology based on the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System, which detects when a Soldier has been targeted and hit by a laser-fitted weapon. But while MILES simply lets users know they have gone from combatant to casualty, DISE displays how and why.

Moreover, “it brings war simulation to a new level,” said



Combined forces touch down after successfully completing an air assault mission in Romania. Photo by Spc. Tanya Polk, 1st Armored Div. PAO

Sgt. Joshua Thurman of the Joint Multinational Training Command, JMRC's higher headquarters.

DISE gear is so realistic, Soldiers at IR '06 performed the same loading and firing steps they would use on an M-16 rifle or M-9 pistol. Even the effective range of each weapon in the DISE system is identical to the real thing.

"We can bring anything into play, from small arms to a Paladin self-propelled howitzer, from rotary-wing aircraft to the Multiple Launch Rocket System," Thurman said. "There is nearly nothing we can't simulate with this system."

With DISE, Soldiers wear a vest equipped with sensors and two built-in speakers that sound when the wearer is "hit." An audio cue gives the wearer one of seven different wound statuses, or even a near-miss ping, which furnished the sound track on IR '06 Bulgarian and Romanian training sites.

DISE allows observers to track battlefield action and to recount how players move and react. It builds skills and confidence.

"With this system, we lift the fog of war by showing Soldiers what really happened," Thurman said. "When you get down to it, this training saves lives."

DISE clarifies complex scenarios and training exercises as it allows Soldiers to ana-

lyze their "field performance" after the action in three-dimension review screens, which can be rotated for better illustration.

Equipped with a Global Positioning System, DISE allowed observers to "pan out" and scrutinize every battlefield competitor, which isn't always possible from ground level. "DISE makes my job one thousand times easier," said JMRC's Sgt. 1st Class Brian Eisch. "DISE eliminates the friction points. No wasted time on who shot whom. DISE doesn't miss a thing."

JMRC Support

During IR '06, Eisch and other JMRC observer controllers acted like coaches in a football game by helping to guide training as it unfolded.

"We identified weaknesses and offered corrective steps," Eisch said. "We showed people how to capitalize on their

Meals on wheels

Almost 300 years ago, Napoleon famously said: "an army marches on its stomach," and today's high-tech Soldiers require sustenance as much as their predecessors.

For IR '06, members of the 7th Army Reserve Command used a new field containerized kitchen, providing two hot meals and one Meal Ready to Eat for each participant daily.

The CK replaces the mobile kitchen trailer, which allowed food service specialists to serve only about 300 people during a meal. With CKs, at least 750 people can eat at one sitting.

Moreover, the containerized kitchen has air

conditioning, an amenity MKTs sorely lacked, plus a refrigerator, an oven and more work-space.

With a work schedule of 3 a.m. to 9 p.m., 464th and 454th Replacement Company Reservists served approximately 800 Soldiers and civilians throughout the day.

"I started out 25 years ago under a shelter-half for the first 18 months I was in the Army," said Lt. Col. Thomas A. Ball, 309th Rear Area Operations Center commander. "High-speed chow was taking C-Rations and warming them on the exhaust manifold. I've had all types of food in the field ... this was world-class chow."

*(Courtesy of Sgt. 1st Class Derrick Wither-
spoon, 7th ARCOM Public Affairs)*

strengths. It's the little things that can get you killed (in combat) and we want people to recognize that."

While training intermixed platoons, controllers assisted commanders in developing unit cohesion and mutual understanding through scenarios and role-playing.

For example, 1st AD artillerymen became infantrymen at Novo Selo as they pulled convoy operations, raided an enemy-held village, practiced quick-reaction-force techniques and joined Romanian and Bulgarian Soldiers in a MOUT exercise. And as in war, strategy and tactics changed on the fly.

Led by Romanian Lt. Constantin Paraschivu, 2nd Platoon was charged with assaulting an occupied building located in a small village. A drawn-out plan had the team walking a ridgeline, using terrain to mask their movements.

But time constraints forced a faster alternative. Paraschivu's crew boarded Humvees and a Bulgarian BMP infantry fighting vehicle to hit the stronghold, taking it out.

Lesson learned: combine strategies and rewrite doctrine as needed.

"The team reacted perfectly," said Staff Sgt. Christopher Smith, 2nd Platoon squad leader. "It was a two-second decision. We did it. We got in there and completed the mission."

"This training," Paraschivu said, "shows that even though we do things differently in each country, we end up in the same direction."

As IR '06 gathered steam, next up was an air assault exercise designed to train Soldiers to reinforce units in combat.

"We practice this mission often with allied nations; it integrates both air and ground assets," said Maj. Jorge Cordeiro, a maneuver team observer controller.

Arriving with his team on a U.S. UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, Sgt. Kelly Konkus, a 1-94 Field Artillery squad leader, called the training "reactionary."

"All you need is the right equipment," he said. "After that, it's all mental."

Romanian Staff Sgt. Florea Sas likened it to a big puzzle, "where every piece has to fit just right."

The last piece of Immediate Response's puzzle came together on the exercise's last day. Mission: chopper into Romania from Bulgaria to capture a suspected "terrorist."

Swooping in via three Black Hawks, the combined force platoons hit the objective running. Within 15 minutes of their landing, the troops captured the "terrorist" and secured the area.

Moving down the road



Photo by Gary L. Kieffer, USAREUR PAO

Getting U.S. Soldiers from Germany into Novo Selo, Bulgaria, the main hub of Immediate Response activities, was demanding. It meant moving 150 vehicles and pieces of equipment onto nearly 60 railcars in five trains, and transporting 800 troops on planes, trains and vehicles.

"The biggest challenge was logistics," said Maj. Marchant Callis, support operations officer, 123rd Main Support Battalion. "Our job was to ensure the task force had everything it needed. Food, fuel, bullets, tools,

medicine – we supplied it all."

Actual exercise training lasted seven days, but it took a month's worth of logistics to make that week a success, Callis said.

And the key to successful logistics, the major believes, is anticipation – knowing what Soldiers need before they even ask.

"This can be tedious, time consuming and frustrating," he said. "The main objective is to not get lost in the details."

(Courtesy of 1st AD Public Affairs)

"The team reacted perfectly. It was a two-second decision. We did it. We got in there and completed the mission."

— Staff Sgt. Christopher Smith, 1-94 FA,
2nd Platoon squad leader

"This wrapped up all of our training," said Staff Sgt. Richard Elliot, a team leader with 1-94 FA. "We practiced, then we rehearsed, then we knew what we had to do, and then we executed it."

"This was training based on the principles of democracy," said Romanian Lt. Col. Iuri Tanase, exercise co-director. "We

all worked hard – the staff elements, the Soldiers. We totally focused our energies on combat skills and interoperability. We learned we can work together successfully on the battlefield."

Or, as Elliot put it, "over time we began to

understand one another."

"Soldiers have a common language," he said. "Our tactics are slightly different. Our uniforms are slightly different. Our weapons are slightly different. Immediate Response '06 gave us the opportunity to share in those differences and to learn from them."

Miesau opens working dog kennel

\$750,000 in renovations ensure deployment readiness

Story and photo by Arthur McQueen, USAREUR Public Affairs

About an hour from U.S. Army, Europe headquarters sits some of the command's most sought-after security assets. Their mission, whether downrange or in theater, is saving lives and protecting property.

They are military working dogs based out of Miesau, Germany, and when traveling through USAREUR or guarding the Kaiserslautern military community, they now have a safe, secure place to bed down for the night.

Moreover, Miesau's location near USAREUR's primary military air hub at Ramstein Air Base ensures the dogs are positioned for deployment.

Col. Jack McClanahan, USAREUR provost marshal, opened the 60-stall kennel and adjoining administrative building May 19 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, followed by a military police canine demonstration.

During his remarks at the ceremony, McClanahan said he had received high-level phone calls about the lack of one explosives detection dog team.

"I guarantee you, people care," about the missions working dogs perform, he said.

The kennel facility previously housed guard dogs for the

Miesau storage site. After 10 years in mothballs, it was renovated for \$750,000, said Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Throckmorton, USAREUR military working dog program manager.

"We weren't tasked to do this, we did it on our own," Throckmorton said.

Within the Department of Defense, military police are not the only ones who need dog teams.

"Engineers, infantry and special forces units are all using these animals," he said. "The program has gotten very big. We are supporting not just the Army, but the Navy as well. Dogs are a combat multiplier that everybody wants, low density and high demand."

Accordingly, the operations tempo for USAREUR working dog teams is high, even more so as the command owns close to 100 dogs, out of less than 600 in the entire Army.

Existing facilities required repeated back-and-forth travel to deployment sites and were insufficient for large deployments, said Staff Sgt. Chad O. Jones, Darmstadt kennel noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

"In the past, when a platoon of dogs and handlers

arrived in the middle of the night, we didn't have room to put them up," Jones said. "The new facility can house 60 dogs and includes an administrative building and training area."



Rio, a military working dog with the 529th Military Police Company, guards Staff Sgt. Darren Smith during a canine capabilities demonstration.

Canine Duties

Own a sense of smell vastly stronger than that of humans, specially trained canines can sniff out concealed explosives or stashed-away drugs that normally would go undetected.

A bomb dog is trained to recognize roughly 10 odors and drug dogs about half as many. And while both functions are vital, as the Global War on Terrorism enters its fifth year, detecting improvised explosive devices remains a priority.

A recent Department of Defense report specifically noted several instances

in Iraq where military working dogs located bomb-rigged vehicles or IEDs designed to kill or injure coalition forces, along with locating numerous caches of small arms and ordnance.

Members of a military working dog team — canine and handler — are trained at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

Usually it takes about a month for the team to bond, said Staff Sgt. Clayton Glover, 529th Military Police Company, Heidelberg, Germany.

For continuity, working dog teams remain together during standard tours of duty, including downrange deployments that are shortened to ensure the dogs'

effectiveness.

"Starting with the Balkans, we have found that six-month deployments are much more practical (for the K-9 teams)," said Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Throckmorton, USAREUR military working dog program manager, adding that a working dog loses its edge after time.

"It makes more sense to have a dog that will function the way it should for six months, rather than being there for a year and only functioning for eight," Throckmorton said.

"Stress can have an effect on dogs as well."



Artillerymen from the 4th Battalion, 319th Field Artillery Regiment, render honors during the 1st Infantry Division's departure ceremony.

Photo by Sgt. John Queen, 69th ADA Brigade Public Affairs

Next stop, Kansas

Big Red One moves to Fort Riley

By Spc. Stephen Baack
1st Infantry Division Public Affairs

The 1st Infantry Division ended a 10-year stay in Germany as it bid farewell July 16 from Leighton Barracks, Wuerzburg, Germany.

The colors of the "Big Red One" now reside at Fort Riley, Kan., where the division will oversee such missions as training foreign security forces in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

Despite numerous deployments to distant countries within the past 10 years, Big Red One Soldiers built lasting relationships with German friends and colleagues. For many, the ceremony marked a bittersweet day.

"When I think about the division returning stateside, I can't help but be saddened just a little," said Maj. Gen. Kenneth W. Hunzeker, 1st ID commanding general.

"Like many of you, I've spent a large part of my military life in Germany. We will miss the culture, the people, the partnerships, the opportunity to travel and even the challenges associated with leading troops overseas," Hunzeker said.

"Serving in Europe," he added, "has also afforded our leaders the opportunity to visit battlefields and walk the ground where our forefathers fought during World War I and World War II. We are humbled to have been so fortunate to be able to study our profession on ground that was fought upon to bring back freedom and democracy to this great continent."

Established in 1917 during WWI, 1st ID moved to Germany after WWII,

remaining until 1955, when it first moved to Fort Riley, Kan. From there, Big Red One Soldiers answered the call to fight in Vietnam, and operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

April 10, 1996, the division returned to Germany, where it played key roles in peacekeeping operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, and deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from February 2004 to February 2005.

"The Big Red One is privileged to

have served more than 43 cumulative years on European soil," Hunzeker said.

"Thousands of 1st ID veterans, from almost every era in our history, have shared in the experience of living and serving alongside our friends and neighbors in this great country," he said. "The fond memories we all have had serving

in Europe help to forever link us to the group of veterans who are very proud to have worn our patch and to the generations of Germans who have shown us hospitality for so many years."



Q&A

‘JMRC has become a center of excellence for our coalition partners’

– Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus

As commanding general of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus has a keen interest in resources provided by the Joint Multinational Training Command and its subordinate unit, the Joint Multinational Readiness Center. In a recent trip to the JMTC/JMRC community, he spoke to *EURArmy* about the significance of training centers and how they contribute to the readiness of USAREUR and the Army.

What brings you, as the U.S. Army's Combined Arms Center commander, to U.S. Army, Europe?

I'm here to visit the Joint Multinational Readiness Center and see how it has changed in recent years, since the Combined Arms Center has some oversight responsibilities for combat training centers throughout the Army, including the National Training Center, the Joint Readiness Center and the Joint Multinational Readiness Center.

As you noted, your command has some oversight of JMRC. Once known as the Combat Maneuver Training Center, JMRC has undergone changes as part of USAREUR's transformation. What is the major change in your eyes?

First of all, as with all of our combat training centers, JMRC has shifted from having a combat-operations-only focus to having a full-spectrum-of-operations focus.

There also is a considerable emphasis on counter-insurgency operations and all the tasks associated with that – tasks that our Soldiers in USAREUR are performing in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Additionally, there has been an increase in the multinational aspect of training – training with our NATO allies and our coalition partners from Europe, with whom we are conducting operations in Iraq,



TRAINING: “An emphasis on counter-insurgency operations.”

Afghanistan and the Balkans.

Also, there is the upgrade in the quality and realism of both the live-fire and the maneuver training, where all elements of the battlefield are represented.

Lastly, there is the extension of the training area in Bad Reichenhall in the Alps, which is important for units that are going to conduct operations in Afghanistan, such as the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, which did substantial training there before going to Afghanistan. We've also really expanded the area covered by JMRC. There are training areas in Poland, Czech Republic, Romania and Bulgaria being used.

What is the significance of having a combat training center based in Europe?

It not only supports U.S. units here, but it also supports our coalition partners. In fact, it has really become a center of excellence for our coalition partners, particularly in counter-IED (improvised explosive device) operations training.

What is the primary difference between JMRC and the other two CTCs: The National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Ca., and the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La.?

It has a multinational aspect that is unique. But it also has a combination of very extensive live-fire opportunities, like those at Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels, that can be extended to a considerable portion of this area.

How does JMRC complement the two stateside CTCs?

Because of this relatively unique multinational aspect of JMRC, it provides observations, insights and lessons to those who write doctrine and to the Center for Army Lessons Learned – which is another element of the Combined Arms Center. But also, JMTC has a deployable component that it is pioneering – which will also be used in the States – called exportable training centers, basically mobile combat training centers.

What does JMRC contribute to the Center for Army Lessons Learned, which your command oversees?

Perhaps the most important lessons from an exercise design perspective come from this exportable training center concept. Also, there's lots of sharing of small-unit tactics, techniques and procedures all the time.

In fact, there are video teleconferences every other week with members of each of the combat training centers and deployed elements, during which we're asking things like, "Do we need to change our training? Is the enemy doing something new to which we need to alert those who are going through the combat training centers?" JMTC/JMRC has participated quite substantially in that.

There's talk of a new Army field manual for counterinsurgency operations, which certainly is based on lessons learned from operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. Where does it stand and what are some of the main doctrines?

The manual currently is in the final draft stages, and it has been sent out for comment to commanders of various units, commanders of training centers and to Army leaders all over the world. The Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate is now receiving that input and working to resolve those issues. We believe it'll probably be published in the fall.

In the development of this new field manual, what do you bring to the table?

I was privileged to command the 101st Airborne

Division during the first year in Iraq – during the fight to Baghdad, and for the rest of the year as we conducted stability operations in northern Iraq. After returning stateside in February 2004, I redeployed for a month in April to do an assessment of Iraqi security forces. I returned to Iraq in early June that year and spent more than 15 months double-hatting as the first commander

of the Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq and the NATO Transition Command-Iraq – both of which we established – with the mission of helping Iraqi security forces organize, train, equip and rebuild the infrastructure.

After that, in September 2005, I went home. But I made a detour on the way, because I was asked to come through Afghanistan for an assessment of Afghan security forces for the secretary of defense.

I also did a year in Bosnia as the chief of operations for NATO's Stabilization Force

and as deputy commander of a joint counter-terrorist task force. So I guess what I bring to the table is a reasonable degree of operational experience.

The Army is undergoing a transformation of its organizational structure, moving to a responsive, modular brigade-based force with joint capabilities. How is that impacting the combat-training curriculum, especially that of JMTC and JMRC?

I think the role of training centers is even greater now because of the fact that a brigade combat team may not have a division commander or a division headquarters around to help get it trained up. I mean the division commander and the division headquarters may be deployed, which has been the case for a number of brigade combat teams already.

JMTC and JMRC will play a large role in assisting nondivisional units and nonbrigade combat team units by preparing their commanders, senior leaders and NCOs for future deployments to achieve readiness as the Army Force Generation Model is implemented.

How is that change in training advancing the USAREUR and overall-Army combat readiness?

I think it's best to approach it from an Army perspective because of course that's what we're really talking about: providing capabilities for our Army and the combatant commanders.

The change in training has given the Army this ability to package and tailor forces so that you have the right force in the right place. I think that's a huge advance for our Army and really for the U.S. military and the combatant commanders who are employing these forces again in Iraq and Afghanistan.



FUTURE: "Transformation influences how training is conducted at CTCs"

On Point

Ramstein detachment provides air power from the ground up

By Lt. Col. Carl L. Giles and
Chief Warrant Officer John A. Robinson,
19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment

For decades, U.S. military services have performed their own unique missions, worn separate uniforms and even possessed service-unique personalities.

While today's armed forces have become increasingly "purple-suit," there still are, and always will be, operational variances.

In Europe, the job of bridging these differences in the joint arena of air and ground collaboration falls on the 19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment.

Embedded with the Air Force's 32nd Air and Space Operations Center at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, the 19th BCD is one of only four active-component Army organizations that synchronize air and ground forces for specific tasks.

The 40-Soldier unit's war and peacetime efforts are integrated into air operations centers, which plan, direct and execute aerial campaign objectives. Its tasks include processing ground forces' requests for air support, preventing friendly fire incidents, translating service-specific jargon and providing fly-on-the-wall views of air and ground operations.

"We have a great deal of experience in coordinating the full spectrum of air-delivered effects to support ground commanders," said Maj. Paul Teague, 19th BCD operations officer.

When an Army unit needs such help, BCDs bring it all together.

How? By ensuring that requests for air support are clear and by determining a tactically sound way to provide it, while interpreting multi-service jargon.

"They can translate the ground commander's requests into 'air' language, so we can better support them," said Australian Air Commodore John Quaife, former director of U.S. Central Command Air Forces' Combined Air Operations Center.

As U.S. Army, Europe's "go to" organization for coordinating and integrating air power in support of ground forces, the 19th BCD represents USAREUR interests to U.S. Air Forces in Europe and 16th Air Force. Through daily intelligence and operations updates, it keeps air components aware of ground operations.

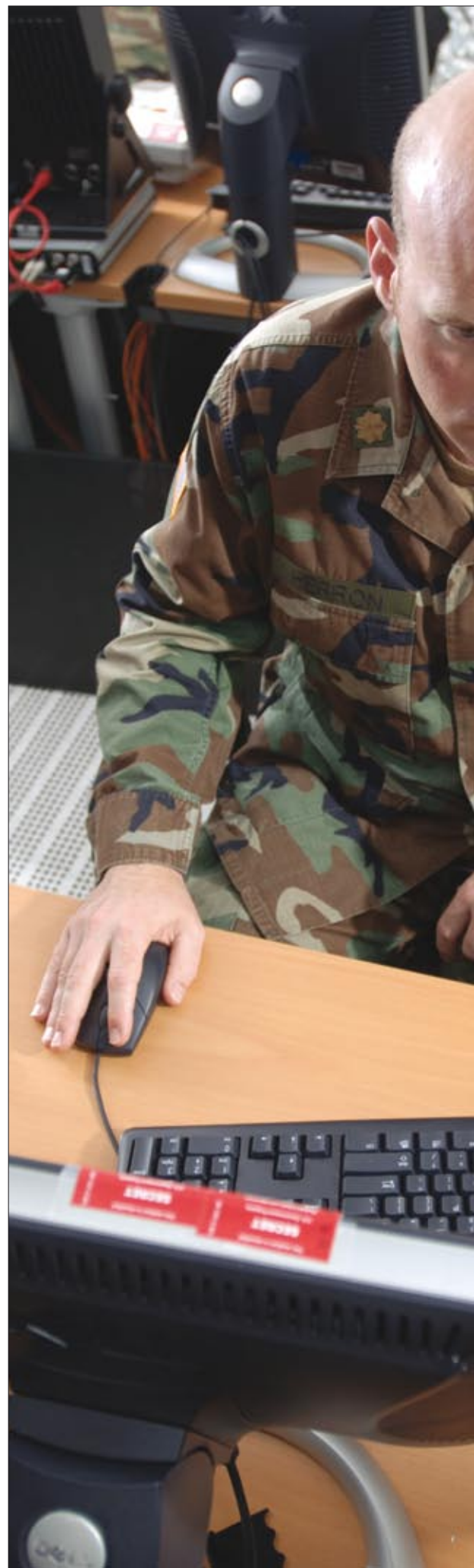
"They ensure AOCs truly understand the ground situation and the desired effects that ground forces want," Quaife said.

In September 2005, the 19th BCD returned from a one-year tour to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, serving as battlefield coordinators for CENTCOM's CAOC. The detachment managed more than 15,000 air support requests, synchronizing close air support, air interdiction, aerial reconnaissance and airlift of cargo and troops.

"We helped to develop a robust presence and show-of-force profile, keys (to) security plans that resulted in Afghani and Iraqi elections," said Col. James Waring, former 19th BCD commander.

Much of what makes the detachment tick is a staff that possesses diverse combat and combat support experience, including field artillery, air defense artillery, aviation, military intelligence, signal corps and transportation branches.

These capabilities will be further enhanced by future staff expansion





Maj. John Herron, 19th BCD airspace chief, trains on the Joint Automated Deep Operations Coordination System. Photos by Spc. Matthis Chiroux, USAREUR Public Affairs Office

of all BCDs. Being added to the mix is a U.S. Marine Corps representative, along with space and information operations capabilities that will be critical as BCDs become responsible for coordinating and synchronizing air and ground electronic warfare assets and psychological operations.

The 19th BCD also engages with multinational partners. While supporting CENTCOM, it supported NATO-led International Security Assistance Forces in Afghanistan and Marine Expeditionary Forces in Iraq. Additionally, the detachment regularly worked with coalition forces, further expanding its knowledge of ground/air coordination.

“The situational awareness we gain (makes) these embeds so valuable to the coalition fight,” said Lt. Col. Greg Baker, 19th BCD operations chief. “The coalition forces come away with a fuller understanding of their component’s capabilities and needs, which makes us smarter as a result.”

While deployed to Southwest Asia, the 19th BCD integrated members of a United Kingdom BCD while working with British forces in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“We worked shoulder-to-shoulder with the coalition, playing a vital role in integrating air power, airlift and airspace in CENTCOM’s area of operations,” Baker said.

Working with NATO also pays off during peacetime, when the 19th BCD works alongside coalition partners at Ramstein’s Allied Air Component Command Headquarters.

To stay sharp when not deployed, the 19th BCD constantly trains while also supporting dignitary fly-ins and other air-support requirements in Europe.

For example, the detachment prepared the Southern European Task Force for their OEF rotation and V Corps for its OIF rotation. It also trained 32nd AOC counterparts for their CAOC rotation, said Sgt. Maj. Marion

Edwards, operations sergeant major.

Besides their home station responsibilities, the 19th BCD has operational control of ground liaison teams located with fighter wings at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany; Aviano Air Base, Italy; and Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England.

With the BCDs’ role in joint operations increasing, the Army and Air Force service chiefs recently agreed to align all BCDs with their respective Air Force Falconer Air and Space Operations Centers.

Furthermore, emphasizing the detachments’ importance in joint ground/air coordination, the Army recently designated BCDs as brigade-level commands.

The detachment’s area of responsibility could increase in future years as EUCOM becomes more involved in eastern Europe and Africa. Gen. James Jones, EUCOM commanding general, recently said: “Our investments have mostly been in western Europe but our activities are definitely moving to the East and to the South with new realities in this asymmetric world.”

“Our mission will remain a critical one,” said Col. David Byrn, 19th BCD commander. “But we always keep our eye on the ball – the Soldiers on the front line. We’re here to support them.”



Capt. Jessica Appgar, 19th BCD intelligence section, tracks incoming data.



MARCHING



AS ONE

U.S. and NATO forces visit the Black Madonna of Czestochowa

Story and photos
by Spc. Matthis Chiroux
USAREUR Public Affairs

Anually, hundreds of thousands of Polish pilgrims – including members of the armed forces – trudge along rolling roads and muddy pathways of their countryside, paying tribute to the Black Madonna of Czestochowa.

This year, they asked Soldiers from their closest neighbors and allied countries to join them in their march.



Polish Military Bishop Tadeusz Ploski leads a prayer in front of the Black Madonna icon of Czestochowa.



Pvt. Anthony Nicholson, 173rd Airborne Brigade, chats with a Polish Soldier before marching into the Jasna Gora monastery.

The Polish army invited 50 U.S. Southern European Task Force Soldiers from Vicenza, Italy, and 10 members of the Illinois Army National Guard, along with troops from four other NATO countries, to participate in the annual 10-day, 300-kilometer pilgrimage from Warsaw to Czestochowa.

SETAF's participation was another example of USAREUR's continued focus on coalition building. In fact, the invitation resulted from SETAF's 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team and the Polish 6th Airborne Brigade jumping together for exercise Immediate Response '04. The end result provided another opportunity to enhance regional cooperation.

"Our involvement puts the best face of the American military forward in a multinational setting," said Gen. David McKiernan, USAREUR commander. "It's a very powerful and positive event."

Standing in a sea of NATO uniforms, on the march's final day, McKiernan called the Polish people "proven allies of the United States and our great friends."

"They serve alongside of us in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, Bosnia and other places," he said. "They are very proud to be our allies."

For the pilgrimage, marchers trekked roughly 20 miles a day, starting Aug. 5, until they reached Czestochowa Aug. 14, making new friendships along the way and reinforcing old ones.

"In a physical sense, we completed 300 kilometers of daily marching," said Maj. Erik Berdy, deputy operations officer for the 173rd. "In a historical sense, we've rekindled some of the connections between the United States and the Polish

people – specifically the military."

Throughout the march, Polish Soldiers handled most of the daily logistics for roughly 800 Soldiers. When troops reached the end of a day's journey, the Poles had camp and hot food waiting for them.

As the pilgrimage drew to a close, blistered and weary troops collectively marched the final two kilometers down Czestochowa's main thoroughfare to the cheers of thousands of spectators lining the city's streets.

People hung out of windows. Mothers held their babies high. Old men stood and saluted as Soldiers marched by, waving greetings and shaking hands with the crowd as the people parted to let them pass.

The Soldiers were surprised at how the town came out to give what they could. "The tears in their eyes, the hugs, the handshakes and the high-fives ... those things endeared the Polish people to us," Berdy said.

"It was amazing to see all of these people turn out to support us," added Sgt. Nathaniel Long of the 173rd. "The whole way through, the hospitality of the people has been unwavering."

As participants climbed one final hill to Jasna Gora, the fortress-monastery that houses the Black Madonna, loudspeakers hanging from the balconies of the medieval structure boomed out greetings.

Special thanks were given to McKiernan, Lt. Gen. Edward Pietrzyk, commander in chief of Polish Land Forces, and to commanders from other participating armies who marched the final leg of the pilgrimage to reach the Black Madonna, a painting whose age is unknown.

For more than six centuries, after being brought to Czestochowa in 1382, it has sat undisturbed in the monastery. After seeing the portrait in its special altar, SETAF's Chap. (Lt. Col.) Joseph Fleury called the Madonna "spectacular."

"She really was a sight to see," he said. "It's great the Soldiers experienced this."

As Fleury and the others began departing the monastery, McKiernan said, "This is an important day for the Polish people and the Polish military. The Polish people are very proud of their military, so when the U.S. military participates in this pilgrimage, they are equally proud. We had a great time marching together."



U.S. Army, Europe commander, Gen. David McKiernan and other NATO officers, greet onlookers along the march route Aug. 14, in Czestochowa, Poland.



Sgt. Samuel Butterfield, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, heads up a muddy hill carrying the U.S. flag as he and Soldiers from six nations near the end of a 10-day pilgrimage that brought them to a remote Polish monastery.

Sharing war

USAREUR readies allied infantry for OIF mission

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Derrick Crawford, 21st Theater Support Command Public Affairs

This summer, a task force of U.S. Army, Europe's top trainers prepared the Republic of Georgia's 31st Light Infantry Battalion for an upcoming deployment to Iraq.

As part of an ongoing mission, the USAREUR team is helping to forge capable, trained units who will deploy to Iraq, joining 850 of their countrymen already there.

The Georgia Sustainment and Stability Operation Program, started in 2005, is one portion of the U.S. European Command's training and equipping program for that nation's military forces.

In July, the 65-member GSSOP Task Force II, spearheaded by Soldiers from USAREUR's Joint Multinational Training Command, traveled to the Krtsanisi training area located near Tbilisi. The 31st Infantry is the first of three battalions undergoing training during 12-week-long rotations.

GSSOP is based on earlier U.S. and Georgian military cooperation efforts, such as the Georgia Train and Equip Program and the Georgia Security Assistance Program that ran from August 2002 through April 2004.

Under GTEP, four Georgian infantry battalions received command and control training, as did Ministry of Defense and Land Forces Command staffs.

While the most recent instruction concentrated on light infantry tactics, Georgian Soldiers serving in military police, reconnaissance, communications and medical specialties received training in their military occupations, all of which will be needed for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"We're doing individual and collective light infantry training to get these Soldiers proficient as a battalion," said task force commander, Lt. Col. Craig Jones.

"This is about coalition building,"

he said. "They are an important ally to the United States and a strong partner within the EUCOM and USAREUR region."

JMTC Soldiers training the Georgians have plenty of experience in preparing troops for combat. They routinely prepare U.S. and other countries' forces for combat and peacekeeping operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and other global trouble spots.

"We've been working on their basic war-fighting skills," said Maj. Buck O'Day, a GSSOP trainer. "We started with about four weeks of mostly individual training, and then progressed to small-unit direction such as moving under direct fire."

A USAREUR medical team from the 212th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital, Miesau, Germany, as well as a mobile training team of military policemen from the U.S. Army Military Police School, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and a communications team from the Army Signal Center, Fort Gordon, Ga., assisted JMTC instructors.

Every Georgian Soldier underwent basic first-aid training, said Capt. Amy Bray, chief of an 11-person GSSOP medical detachment of Army and Navy medics, corpsmen, nurses and physicians. Additionally, one squad member studied advanced first aid skills adapted from the Army's Combat Lifesavers Course.

"We also are working with their medical platoon, giving them additional training to function as medics," she noted.

Self-sustaining medical teams are new to the Georgian army, so the GSSOP medical detachment is "engaging the leadership and conducting 'train-the-trainer' sessions," Bray said.

Most Georgian Soldiers have never received this type of training, said Capt.



1st Lt. Wade Cleland, an infantry instructor from the Joint Multinational Training Command, demonstrates Soldier maneuver techniques at the Krtsanisi training area near Tbilisi.

Charlene Wilson, 212th MASH, adding, "what we expect them to do when going into combat is to help their fellow Soldiers on the battlefield."

As for military police responsibilities, a four-member GSSOP team laid

Warrior skills



Joint Multinational Training Command, teaches a Georgian soldier in a field range.

the foundation for a fully functioning MP company by running Georgian squads through urban warfare tactics, route reconnaissance, checkpoint operations and detaining of enemy combatants.

Aside from issues of communica-



Sgt. Ronald Pierce, a 212th MASH medic, watches as a Georgian Soldier practices IV techniques.

tion, the U.S. trainers said their greatest challenge at Tbilisi was the Soviet-era doctrine, which centralizes leadership on commissioned officers, with little or no responsibility given to its noncommissioned officers or enlisted members.

To overcome this obstacle, GSSOP placed enlisted Soldiers, particularly NCOs, in charge of unit operations by putting them in situations where they were forced to lead.

"They have the fundamentals of operating as a light infantry battalion," Jones said. "By working with us, they understand the benefits of how the U.S. Army does business versus the way most of them were trained."

It's a hurdle for Georgian enlisted leaders who have never attended formal NCO leadership courses, he said, but they are adapting to the concept of enlisted Soldiers assuming greater roles.

"To bridge the gap," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Leasor, an MP instructor, "we took their NCOs aside to spend additional time on professional development."

Jones described the Georgian Soldiers as "professional and motivated."

"For the last two weeks we've been training in temperatures above 110 degrees, and these Soldiers haven't slowed down at all," Jones said. "They are mentally and physically tough, and they are learning rapidly."

'Embrace the Challenge, Exceed the Standard'



By Arthur McQueen, USAREUR Public Affairs

In an event-filled week at Germany's Grafenwoehr Training Area, four Soldiers and four noncommissioned officers completed a comprehensive range of tests designed to measure the full spectrum of their warrior skills.

All eight vied for the title of U.S. Army, Europe's best during the annual USAREUR Soldier/NCO of the Year Competition July 6 to 10.

The candidates seeking the USAREUR Soldier of the Year title were: Spc. Jonathan Welch, Southern European Task Force; Spc. Scott Hanshew, 1st Armored Division; Spc. John S. Emmett, 21st Theater Support Command; and Spc. Jacob Flores, 1st Infantry Division.

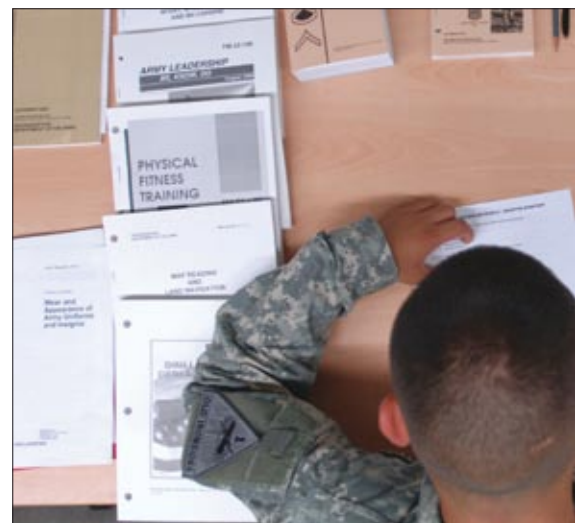
The NCO candidates were: Sgt. Brian Yoder, 7th Corps Support Group; Sgt. Muhammadun Abdallah, Joint Multinational Training Command; Sgt. Delroy Barnett, 1st Armored Division; and Sgt. Shawn Walbeck, Southern European Task Force.

The competitors knew before arriving that graded or judged events included: board appearances; the Army Physical Fitness Test; written exams; weapons qualification; land navigation; combat tasks; and a 15-kilometer road march.

Spc. Jonathan Welch moves through the nuclear, biological, and chemical challenge.

Photo by Sgt. Kristine Smedley, TSC Vilseck

2006 USAREUR Soldier/NCO of the Year Competition



Spc. Scott Hanshew tackles a timed written exam. *Photo by*



Sgt. Shawn Walbeck shoots an azimuth to find the next situational training lane. Photos by Spc. Matthis Chiroux, USAREUR PAO

Sgt. Delroy Barnett crosses a rope bridge suspended over a “mined” creek during the Bundeswehr-planned “mystery task.”

A heavy emphasis was put on warfighting skills, said Master Sgt. Jeffery Brewer, of the 7th Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy, whose staff took four months to develop and refine the competition.

Academy instructors, Brewer said, “strove to make the competition as realistic and as close to combat conditions as possible” in a training environment.

“Our goal was to not only test the knowledge and skill of the Soldiers and NCOs, but to test their will in overcoming adversity and accomplishing their mission,” he said.

The first event of opening day had academy instructors administering

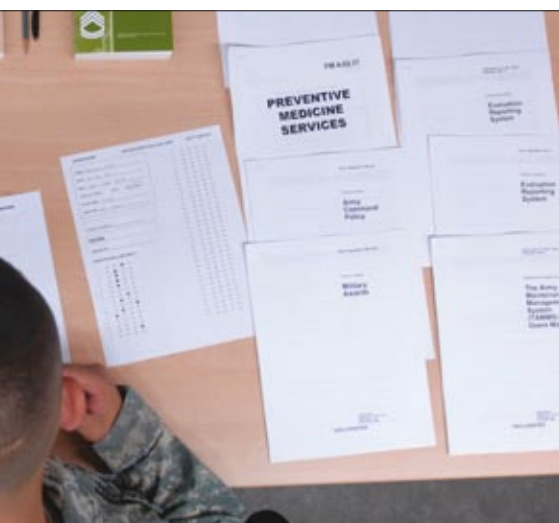


Photo by Spc. Matthis Chiroux, USAREUR PAO



Sgt. Muhammadun Abdallah leads a group of “coalition” Soldiers to safety.

Spc. Scott Hanshew finishes off a simulated sniper by throwing a grenade into a bunker. Photos by Arthur McQueen, USAREUR PAO



fitness testing. After pumping out two minutes each of push-ups and sit-ups, the participants finished with a two-mile run.

Showering and then donning Class-A uniforms, the Soldiers then completed written essays and a 50-question test on military subjects. Between tackling exams, they also appeared before a board comprised of senior USAREUR command sergeants major, who grilled the competitors with questions ranging from Army history and current events, to military justice and leadership.

Day two found the Soldiers at the small arms range, zeroing in and qualifying on the M-4 carbine before attempting a “mystery task,” a peacekeeping scenario developed by the Bundeswehr (German army).

Competitors had 30 minutes to complete a mission that started off with a perilous trek along a “mined” creek, and an encounter with a leaderless German patrol saddled with an injured member.

Crossing the creek with a rope bridge, the participants’ goal was finding safe haven for all. Speedy decision-making was a key to success as time was limited in finding a “friendly fisherman” who directed the makeshift band across a lake in borrowed boats, avoiding mine-strewn paths and enemy detection.

The day wasn’t over yet; a 15-kilometer rucksack march over rough terrain awaited the competitors. Weighed down with helmets, weapons, body armor, full canteens and 35-pound rucksacks, the trudge left the eight contenders soaked, sore and short of breath.

Given a brief rest, they finished the first day back at the range performing night weapons qualification.



Spc. John S. Emmett rows a raft during the Bundeswehr-planned mystery event. *Photo by Spc. Matthis Chiroux, USAREUR PAO*



Next morning, the eight competitors began with a daylong test of their combat skills in first aid, processing prisoners of war, grenade tossing, Claymore mine placement, tactical observation procedures and infantry tactics, with a timed land navigation being the final challenge.

The exhausted participants did not know who had won when they left Grafenwoehr for home, having to wait until a banquet in Heidelberg, Germany, Aug. 25, to hear the names of Sgt. Delroy Barnett and Spc. John S. Emmett called out as the command's best.

Emmett called the competition a trying test of will and preparation that demanded the best from each Soldier.

"Everyone came to win, and consequently, the competition was very close," he said.

The announcement received thunderous applause from 300 supporters gathered at the Patrick Henry Village Pavilion.

Gen. David McKiernan, USAREUR commanding general, said he was honored to participate in ceremonies

Sgt. Delroy Barnett bandages a simulated abdominal wound. *Photo by Arthur McQueen, USAREUR PAO*



Competitors begin the two-mile run portion of the Army Physical Fitness Test. Photo by Arthur McQueen, USAREUR PAO

recognizing the Soldiers. He reminded the winners that their tasks are just starting.

“You now have an even greater responsibility to live the Army Values, embody the Warrior Ethos and instill these values in the Soldiers placed under you,” he said.

“As we continue the Global War on Terrorism, it is you we look to, to continue the fight,” McKiernan added. “Leadership is hard to define but easy to recognize. These Soldiers have accepted the challenge and dedicated themselves to excellence.”

Emmett and Barnett will represent USAREUR at the Army SOY/NCOY competition Oct. 1 to 6 at Fort Lee, Va. Army-level winners will be announced Oct. 10 at the Association of the U.S. Army conference in Washington, D.C.

“I have wanted to join the U.S. Army since I was a boy in Jamaica,” Barnett said. “I am proud to serve, and eager to test myself against the best the Army has to offer.”



Above right: Leaning on a Humvee, Sgt. Brian Yoder studies a map before attempting the night land-navigation course. Photo by Staff Sgt. Adam Mancini, JMRC Vipers

Right: Sgt. Shawn Walbeck reports to a board of senior USAREUR NCOs. Photo by Arthur McQueen, USAREUR PAO



'I love you. Goodbye.'

Part III: Counting down the days

By Karen S. Parrish
Photos by Gary L. Kieffer
USAREUR Public Affairs

This is the third in a series of articles following two U.S. Army, Europe families through a year of deployment. Capt. Erik Iliff and Sgt. Robert Dorsey are deployed to Iraq with the "Ready First" 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division. Chelsea Iliff and Janine Dorsey, their wives, work and live in Giessen, Germany.

Down range, many of 1st BCT's Soldiers are now working in and around Ramadi, which a Defense Department spokesman has called "the most contentious city in Iraq."

And after the unit leaves combat behind and redeploys, after Soldiers reintegrate with their families, 1st BCT is slated to leave Germany and return to the States.

Seven months into a year-long separation and facing more major life changes in the coming year, the Dorseys and the Iliffs spoke to *EURArmy* in August about holding on and hanging in.



Kekai Lindsey

Janine Dorsey's 15-year-old son, Kekai, said he spent part of his summer vacation helping out with his 2-year-old sister, Sophia, and sometimes lending his mother a hand in her job at Giessen's Army Community Services. A few weeks before school started, he began working at the commissary.

"It's pretty cool. I make good money, and it's a good environment, nice people," he said.

Kekai's stepfather, Rob, came home on rest

'The trick is to find small things to look forward to ... The halfway point is one of those milestones for me. Now I am counting down towards my R&R leave. After my R&R leave, I will count down the days until I leave the country. If I split up the deployment, then I always have something to look forward to and I am able to stay motivated.'

– Capt. Erik Iliff

and recuperation, or R&R, leave in May.

"It was really nice to see him. It was different though, because you're so used to not seeing him," he said.

After Rob had been back for a week or so, Kekai said, "It felt like when he was here before, but it was still different, because we hadn't seen him in so long. But it was good and really nice to see him there."

When Rob went back to Iraq, he said, "That was sad. Mom was really sad, and he didn't want to go. It's hard when they come back on R&R, to know that they have to go back to that place. It went by really quickly, that two weeks."

But for the rising sophomore – "a little higher on the food chain now," as he put it – his mother, his sister and plans for the new school year kept him smiling. Sophia is "the ruler of the household," Kekai said.

"She's smart too. I mean for a little baby, she yells at me, tells me to shush. We love each other. I love her more than anything. She's adorable," he said.

He said his plans for his tenth-grade year include football, basketball, and – a surprise to his mother – a second year in JROTC.

"I like the program. I didn't want to do it at the end of the school year, but now that I think about it I had lots of fun," he said.

Janine said, "Oh, I'm so proud of him, that's so good!

My husband was so disappointed when he said he wasn't going to take that this year."

Kekai's mother echoes her son's words about Rob's R&R.

"It was awesome," she said. "We had the best time. We really, really had the best time during R&R."

She said several people, including Rob's mother (his father had been in Special Forces), had warned her before he came home to be careful waking him up.

"I was a little



Janine Dorsey

nervous. People were telling me if he's sleeping and he starts moving around in his sleep, don't touch him," she said. "So the first time we fell asleep and I had to wake him up, I stood by the door. He's on the opposite side of the bed, and I yell 'Rob!' He was like, 'What are you doing?' 'I had to wake you up.' 'Why are you all the way over there?' Normally I just go up to him and hug him and stuff and now he's like, 'What are you doing?' 'They told me not to touch you, so I didn't know ...' He started laughing."

During R&R, Janine said, her major goal was to enjoy spending time with Rob and not think about him leaving again.

"I didn't even think about it once. The whole time, we just enjoyed ourselves. We laughed, we had a lot of fun together, we went to the mall ... we didn't really do very much, just spent time together," she said.

She said the weeks after Rob returned to duty were the hardest for her to cope with since the deployment began, partly because Rob's unit is now working mostly around Ramadi.

"I was really depressed. I wouldn't get out of bed except to go to work for about a month," she said. "I'm ten times more worried about him now."

Since then, she said, she has cut back on volunteering and college courses and started going to the gym regularly, where she works out and runs on a treadmill.

She's sleeping better as a result, she said, and advises other spouses to take care of themselves in similar ways. Her primary message to her fellow wives of combat Soldiers, she said, is "be a little more understanding of your husband."

"I have a variety of friends. Some get presents all the time and calls all the time. Some get nothing. It all depends on the job and the emotional state of their husbands, and we need to be supportive of them even if it means putting aside our own wants and needs," she said.

Janine said Rob loves the Army and she will support whatever career choice he makes when he returns, but she

dreads another deployment. "I think I might just lose it. I don't know how people do it more than once," she said. "I would need some time in between. I could do it, I know this is what I signed up for, but I think a year is just way too long."

Meanwhile, Janine said, "I just want him to come home in one piece."

Erik Hiff

Erik is scheduled to take R&R leave in October, and, like Rob, will probably see his work site shift to Ramadi before then. In an e-mail interview, he described how his job has evolved over the deployment.

"I still work in the Tal Afar Joint Coordination Center with the purpose of training the Iraqi Security Forces to run a mid-sized city," he wrote. "It is encouraging to see how far the Iraqi police officers I work with have come. They can now plan and coordinate missions across the city, with both Iraqi army and Iraqi police involved, with minimal to no input from me. On day one of my job, my commander told me to work myself out of a job, and I am finally nearing that point in my work here in Tal Afar."

Erik also wrote about the approaching end of the deployment, how he maintains contact with Chelsea, and the morale of the Soldiers he is deployed with:

I think it is always easier when you are past the halfway mark in a deployment. I now count down the days remaining in Iraq rather than counting up from the day I arrived in country. I think the trick is to find small things to look forward to along the course of the deployment. The halfway point is one of those milestones for me. Now I am counting down towards my R&R leave. After my R&R leave, I will count down the days until I leave the country. If I split up the deployment, then I always have something to look forward to, and I am able to stay motivated.

I still e-mail Chelsea regularly. I try to keep her informed

Ready First commander: 'Ramadi mission at turning point'

By Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, July 14, 2006 — Anti-insurgent efforts in the Iraqi city of Ramadi are beginning to bear fruit, a senior U.S. military officer said today.

"We're in a transition point in the fight for Ramadi. There's still a lot to do, but we're on the right track," Army Col. Sean B. MacFarland said from his headquarters in Ramadi during a satellite teleconference with Pentagon reporters.

MacFarland is the commander of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division.

The 1st Brigade assists Iraqi soldiers and police in defeating insurgents within the unit's area of operations, he said.

Ramadi is the capital of Anbar province and is located west of Baghdad.

The 1st BCT contains members from all of the U.S. armed services, MacFarland said.

The 1st BCT was initially deployed to the Tal Afar area in western Ninevah province in January, MacFarland said. The unit moved and took up anti-insurgent operations in Anbar on June 11, he said.

MacFarland said his troops work in partnership with Iraqi soldiers and police in the area.

Ramadi was known as a hotbed of insurgent activity. But today, "we're beginning to take the city back from the insurgents," MacFarland said. "And, now, it's important for us to hold what we've got and to begin to build where we hold."

The efforts of Iraqi police and soldiers are the key to ultimately securing Ramadi, MacFarland said. "And, they're making good progress, and we're committed to helping them get to where they need to be."

Ramadi's residents are historically known for their recalcitrant views in re-

gard to authority, MacFarland said. This situation likely accounts for some of the insurgent activity in the area.

Al Qaeda used violence - including murder - to cow Ramadi citizens to stay at home and away from their jobs, MacFarland said.

Iraqi soldiers and police are taking an increasing role in conducting security operations in Ramadi, the colonel said.

This is a development that's paramount to achieve victory against the insurgents, he said.

Multiple control points established around the city also are helping to disrupt insurgent activities, MacFarland said.

"We are beginning to reintroduce the Iraqi security forces back into the city and establish the secure conditions for people to come back out of their homes and begin productive employment," he said.

"The tide is beginning to shift."

about my daily routine. What may seem like a small, uneventful day to me, still makes her feel like a part of my life.

In turn, she has done a great job of letting me know about her daily routine, which makes me feel much more connected with her.

I would be lying if I said that morale was high and there were no problems with anyone. When anyone is taken away from their family and put in a combat zone, the natural reaction is a drop in morale. That being said, I believe that with the halfway mark behind us, the Soldiers and leaders are all encouraged that they will be home with their families soon enough.

As I said before, the trick is to keep yourself and those around you from focusing on the months that are left in the deployment, rather to celebrate each time another week or month passes by.

Morale at home has been a concern too, Chelsea said, as the deployment wears on and the Ready First's return to the states approaches. Giessen and Friedberg were announced in 2003 as communities slated to close, but details became available only in recent months. (See sidebar.)

"We knew it was coming, we didn't know when it was going to be," she said. "I don't think there's been a lot of shock; the notification has given us a base to say okay, what are we going to do from here? In some ways I think it's been good."

Transformation plans coupled with the Army's resource challenges mean her job at the Giessen Education Center will end Sept. 15, she said. The Iliffs knew they would be leaving Germany after the deployment, when Erik is scheduled to attend the Military Intelligence Captains Career Course. "It's something I'd pay a lot more attention to if we were really going to be affected by it, but we're going to be moving to a different area," she said. "So, selfishly, it hasn't affected me too much other than the job's going away."

She said the unit's rear detachment and the spouses are managing well.

"We're at the seventh month here, and I've seen a lot more people home on R&R lately, and that's been good," she said.

"Even if it's not my husband coming home, it's been friends stopping by my office, and it's been more people. More testosterone in this community has been nice. I think overall, the spouses have done really well. We were better prepared for this deployment as a battalion, FRG (Family Readiness Group) wise with the way they set it up ... all that kind of structure that we really didn't have in place last time. I've been really impressed with what they've done from that aspect."

Chelsea spent time with her family over the summer, she said, traveling to Maui to visit her brother and parents, and hosting her mother's visit to Germany.

"It was a lot of fun to see everybody. It's always interesting though, and I talk to the people about that in the community here, that you go away and people just don't get it," she said. "People who aren't in the military community, even if it's family, don't understand a deployment like someone who's here. So it's wonderful to be around your family, but for me it's

Unit transformation: 1st Battalion Combat Team, 1st Armored Division

After unit members return from deployment to Iraq in January 2007 and subsequently reintegrate with their families in Europe, they eventually will move to the U.S. Manning will be reduced before returning the unit's flag stateside.

These unit transformation actions will affect approximately 3,500 Soldiers and 5,200 family members. Additionally, three U.S. civilian employees will be affected. There are no local national positions associated with the 1st Brigade.

Departure of 1AD's 1st BCT will allow USAREUR to return facilities in Giessen and Friedberg to the German government as previously announced in 2003. These returns will occur by the end of fiscal year 2008.

— From a June 8 U.S. Army, Europe press release.

good to be here ... I just feel closer to Erik here. And I think that's going to make sense to some people and not to others."

Chelsea said she and Erik both recognize that many of their friends have trouble dealing with the challenges an extended separation brings.

"There are just so many people in this community who don't find other outlets," she said. "I think when you do that you're going to get angry, you're going to get upset with your husband. And if you don't take care of yourself you're not going to be able to take care of that marriage."

She said spouses at home during a deployment may be more concerned with mailing packages and keeping up the home front than with caring for themselves.

"But I really think it's important, and I know Erik would say the same thing, that if I'm not happy about what I'm doing I become angry at the Army and my husband, and I think that's where the rift starts. That's always been something big for us, that we are happy in the military so long as we both have things to do," she said. "And that is a concern for me in losing this job because I think, how am I going to take care of myself at that point?"

Chelsea said she was impressed with the number of people she has seen taking college courses or finding jobs. Also important, she said, is to find someone to talk to when anger

or sadness sets in.

"Hey, if you're angry at your husband, call your friend. They can talk you down from it," she said. "There have been some phone calls like that, where you call your friend and you say, 'I really want to send this e-mail.' And she says, 'Well, maybe you shouldn't send that e-mail.' People who try to go through this by themselves are not going to get very far successfully. You've got to have outlets, be it your family or your friends."

Editor's note: Sgt. Robert Dorsey could not be reached for comment for this article.



Chelsea Iliff



Strykers

2nd SCR arrives



roll in in Europe

Story and photos by Dave Melancon,
USAREUR Public Affairs

The latest wave of U.S. Army, Europe's transformation rolled into Germany on 2,400 wheels July 28. Three hundred Strykers, along with other combat vehicles, artillery pieces and containers assigned to the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment arrived aboard two U.S. Navy cargo ships in the northern German port city of Bremerhaven.

The 10,000-mile sea journey for the Stryker combat vehicles from their former home in Fort Lewis, Wash., to Vilseck, Germany, marked a return of the regiment to Europe.

The unit's arrival and stand-up is one of several pieces of USA-REUR's transformation falling into place this year.

Within 10 years' time, USAREUR will reduce its overall troop strength from nearly 62,000 Soldiers to about 24,000. The number of installations will decrease from 236 to 88, with four major sites, called joint operating bases, located in Germany (Wiesbaden, Kaiserslautern and Grafenwoehr) and Italy (Vicenza).

The 1st Infantry and 1st Armored Divisions will return stateside as other units will inactivate, re-flag or combine with other forces.

Even while the number of troops and weapon systems is reduced, USAREUR's combat power will not decline, due in part to the Strykers, said Maj. Gen. Mark Hertling, USAREUR deputy chief of staff for operations.

After transformation, the 2nd SCR and Vicenza's 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team will be permanently stationed in theater and augmented by deployable brigade combat teams rotating in and out of eastern European sites, according to current USAREUR plans.

Already battle-tested in Iraq, Strykers provide combatant commanders with firepower, agility and state-of-the-art technology in the Army's most advanced and best-equipped formations.

A Stryker brigade's strength is its mobility, Hertling said.

"Moving quickly is something you can't do with the heavy armor formations we now have in theater," he said. "You can pick up the Stryker out of an airfield or a ship and send it places very quickly."

Three days were required stateside to stow and secure 1,166 tracked and wheeled vehicles, trailers and containers aboard the USNS Mendonca, a U.S. Military Sealift Command roll-on/roll-off cargo ship, which left Tacoma, Wash., in early July.

The first Strykers rolled off the Mendonca July 24 in Bremerhaven. Its sister ship, the USNS Cape Decision, began off-loading vehicles and equipment three days later.

As civilian stevedores unshackled vehicles, 2nd SCR Soldiers drove the Strykers off the ship while members of the 838th Transportation Battalion inventoried and inspected the incoming cargo.

The battalion routinely moves large numbers of vehicles and equipment during port operations, "but this mission was exceptional because this is the first time any of my Soldiers have worked with Strykers," said the unit's commander, Lt. Col. John Hanson.

During the unit's movement, two trains full of Stryker vehicles and other unit equipment departed daily from Bremerhaven for Vilseck, with the last load arriving Aug. 14.

The regiment's arrival in Bavaria began July 28 as railcars loaded with Strykers pulled into the Vilseck garrison rail yard, with Pvt. Paul Hedge maneuvering the first Stryker – bumper number A23 – down the loading ramp.

As Strykers were maneuvered off the train, crews moved their vehicles to a nearby staging area. Then, groups of 10 convoyed to their respective squadron motor pools in Vilseck.

While part of the regiment was off-loading vehicles, other unit members and their families completed arrangements for their new lives in Europe.

The 2nd SCR, about the size of a brigade, is the largest unit to relocate to Germany in several decades, according to Installation Management Agency, Europe officials. It also is the first large unit to arrive en masse with families.



The U.S. Army Garrison, Grafenwoehr's elementary and middle school complex is part of the \$600 million in construction projects undertaken to accommodate 7,000 to 10,000 Soldiers and family members from the 2nd SCR and other units moving into the community.

U. S. Army Garrison, Grafenwoehr began ramping up for the new Stryker unit several months ago – building new schools, family housing, training areas and recreational facilities.

Beginning May 18, 2nd SCR Soldiers and their families arrived at the Nuernberg airport. From there they traveled to the Vilseck in-processing center. Vilseck's Memorial Fitness Center converted to a one-stop in-processing site where Soldiers arranged for housing and registered their identification cards into the Installation Access Control System.

In many cases, after completing initial in-processing paperwork and attending briefings, the new arrivals, with baggage and pets in tow, headed directly to their new quarters.

Unlike a typical permanent change of station move, where newcomers stay in a hotel for a week or more while looking for a home, 2nd SCR Soldiers and families moved into their housing upon arrival.

While still out-processing at Fort Lewis, Stryker Soldiers were given an early start with house and apartment hunting, said Robert Arbios, USAG Grafenwoehr housing manager.

Members of his staff traveled to Washington state to meet with Soldiers and their families, discussing housing needs and preferences and answering questions about life in Germany.

One common concern: differences between living in the Tacoma metropolitan area versus rural Germany. People inquired about house and apartment sizes, available services and amenities such as high-speed Internet connections.

While some members of Arbios' team were stateside, others scoured Vilseck and the surrounding communities for available accommodations.

The regiment's advance party provided people to inspect apartments and houses.

"The Soldiers and their families contributed to our success by being cooperative;

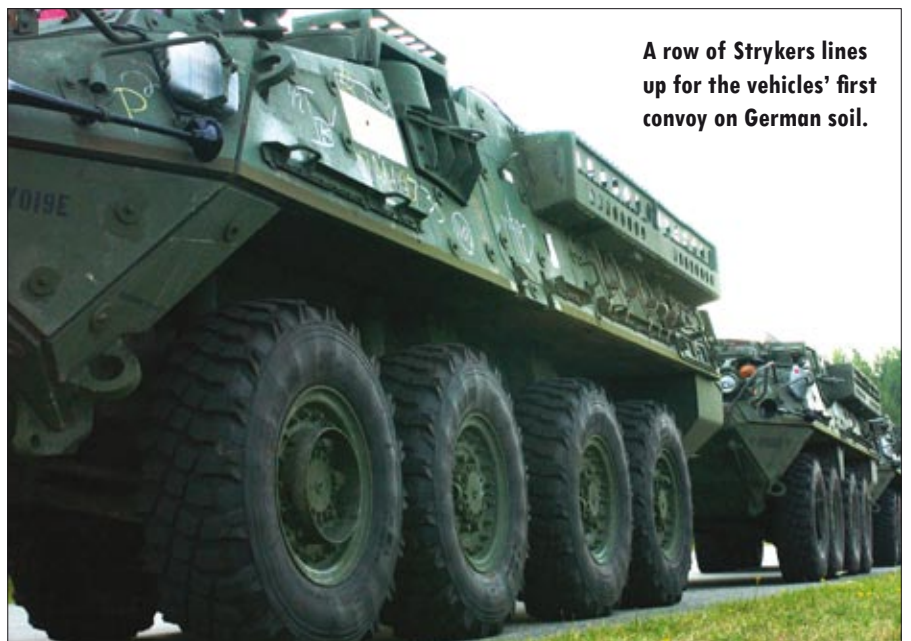
accepting housing assignments for which they had no control or never seen before," Arbios said.

According to housing office estimates, approximately 1,600 families and single Soldiers are looking for quarters. That is about 200 to 400 more households than the Soldiers and families from 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, the last large unit assigned to Vilseck, needed.

Finding accommodations for the incoming Stryker families is equal to three to five years of normal operations, Arbios said. Usually, the housing office assists about 300 to 400 families annually, he said.

"We're condensing a lot of stuff we do over a longer period into a much shorter period, and we're still serving Soldiers and their families. That's what we like to do," Arbios said.

The Stryker's arrival completes a major portion of USA-REUR's transformation. Soon, combat commanders will have the Army's most mobile and modern combat system at their disposal, as 2nd SCR begins training on its new home turf with NATO partners.



A row of Strykers lines up for the vehicles' first convoy on German soil.

CHEVRON NOTES

As U.S. Army, Europe Soldiers return home from deployment, you as NCO leaders will find yourself with a completely new set of leadership challenges. You have trained, mentored and led these Soldiers in one of the most challenging environments you will ever face.

Now, you're coming home and will face a new set of challenges: taking care of these Soldiers, personally and professionally, in a completely different environment.

During your deployment, your Soldiers matured into leaders. They are now seasoned combat veterans. As an NCO, I know it's a great feeling to train Soldiers and observe them as they transition from inexperienced young Soldiers into competent NCOs who can and have led our warriors in combat. But now, as you transition back to Europe, more than ever, it is the time for you to practice engaged leadership.

As I've said before, USAREUR Soldiers are extraordinary. And, they deserve extraordinary leadership. As they return from deployment, your leadership challenges will shift focus as the mission changes from war fighting to reintegration.

I realize that all of our non-commissioned officers are dedicated to training, inspiring and motivating Soldiers, but we are entering a time when this may require a more creative approach than we've taken in the past.

It is imperative that we as leaders do what we can to continue

NCO development, to continue to grow these Soldiers into strong leaders. This includes both their professional development and personal growth. Many Soldiers are making career decisions right now. As NCOs we need to guide them. We need to work our hardest to ensure they receive the opportunities they deserve. Getting these Soldiers into the Noncommissioned Officers Education System and other professional development schools will be vital to their future success.

We also need to ensure we are making our Soldiers aware of other career opportunities, especially reenlistment options. Whether the Soldier and his or her family wish to stay in USAREUR, or if they are interested in returning stateside, work with them and your retention NCOs to make it happen. These Soldiers have demonstrated their hard work and dedication to USAREUR and its mission. Now it's time to show our Soldiers that we appreciate their sacrifices by giving them our total support.

As first-line leaders you are well aware that your duties may include helping your Soldiers work through family issues. Deployments are hard on both Soldiers and families. During their time apart, Soldiers, spouses and their children have all matured and learned new skills. Just as your Soldiers had to adjust to life in the combat zone, they may now have to readjust to life at home.



Encourage your Soldiers to start out in neutral territory with their families. In other words, they shouldn't try to pick up where they left off. Advise them to get away for a couple of days so neither spouse is expected to fall back into the same roles they had before deployment. Returning Soldiers and families need time to get reacquainted with each other.

Our Soldiers have given their all to the USAREUR mission. They have continually exceeded our expectations. They are warriors and deserve outstanding leadership. We must be up to the task of keeping these Soldiers engaged.

With redeployment, the environment may have changed, but your mission has not: Lead these Soldiers and take care of these Soldiers. They deserve the best we can give them.

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